

FY 2012-13 Sanitation Rates

May 22, 2012

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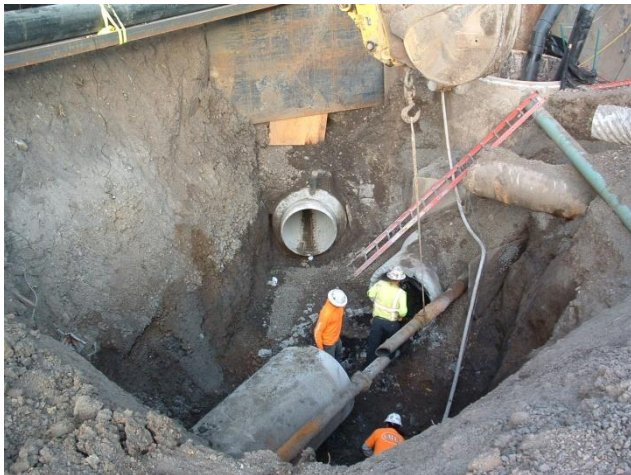
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Today's Presentation

- Public Outreach
- Review Milestone Events
- Ongoing Maintenance, Operations
- FY 2012/13 Rates
- Sonoma Valley CSD New Rate Structure



Public Outreach



SONOMA VALLEY COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT Update: Your District's Budget

In 2011-2012, District residential property owners paid an annual \$732 service charge (equivalent to approximately \$62 a month) on their property taxes to fund the District's \$20 million operating and treatment of sewage and includes expenses for the collection and treatment of sewage and maintenance of 120 miles of sewer pipelines. The budget also covers costs associated with recycled water projects. A flat rate structure was used to calculate the annual service charge. This means every District homeowner paid the same amount no matter how much sewage they contributed to the District's treatment plant.

Proposed volume-based rate structure
A newly proposed volume-based rate structure will be considered by the District's Board in June 2012. The new rate structure would take effect in late 2012. The volume-based structure would allow District residential ratepayers to have control over 30 percent of their sewer bill by calculating the amount of water consumed per household during winter months. To lower a sewer bill, a resident could reduce their water use during the winter months by utilizing District water efficiency rebate programs and/or simply turning off outdoor irrigation systems. The remaining 70 percent of the sewer bill would be based on a fixed calculation that pays for ongoing maintenance and operations costs associated with the treatment and collection of the District's sewage. The new rate structure would not apply to commercial customers of the District. Learn more about the volume-based rate structure by visiting the District's webpage at www.sonomacountywater.org/svcsd or call Spencer Bader, Sonoma County Water Agency Division Manager Administrative Services, at 707.521.6207.

Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Budget Schedule
The District's fiscal year starts on July 1st of each year and runs through June 30th of the following year. District personnel are currently preparing fiscal year 2012-2013 budget documents for public review by early spring 2012. Proposition 218 notices (a state-required notice informing ratepayers of annual rate changes) will be mailed to District ratepayers in spring, 2012. The Board will hold a public hearing in June 2012 to receive staff's budget recommendations, consider the proposed volume-based rate structure, and consider for adoption the fiscal year 2012-2013 rates, pending results of the Proposition 218 notices.

This update is part of an ongoing effort to communicate District news and information to ratepayers. Learn more about the District at www.sonomacountywater.org/svcsd or contact District Operations Manager Brian Anderson at 707.521.1812.



SONOMA VALLEY COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT Update: Recycled Water

A regional recycled water provider

There is no such thing as "new" water. As a matter of fact, our water has been recycled since beyond the age of the dinosaurs. The Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District has dedicated itself to improving its water treatment process to meet state health regulations and provide the highest quality recycled water for agricultural irrigation and habitat restoration purposes. In 2006, the District completed the construction of a tertiary treatment plant. Sewage that is tertiary treated is allowed under state health regulations to be used for recycled water purposes. Currently, the District delivers a total of 237 million gallons of recycled water annually to users including vineyards, dairies and pasturelands located in southern Sonoma Valley. Recycled water use also helps offset water demand from the Russian River and groundwater use in Sonoma Valley.

New recycled water storage reservoir

Driving by the District's treatment plant on 8th street east you may have noticed a lot of dirt being moved around. That dirt has now become the District's fifth recycled water reservoir that will hold 37 million gallons, or 100 acre-feet of recycled water. This reservoir will help the District reduce the discharge of treated wastewater into Schell Slough and San Pablo Bay and instead put it to beneficial use for agricultural and habitat restoration purposes. The project was partially funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Recycled water helping restore wildlife habitat

The District's recycled water program is helping restore wildlife habitat near San Pablo Bay through a regional collaborative called the North Bay Water Reuse Authority. This group of local governments, including state and federal agencies, is working to turn highly contaminated ponds that once produced commercial grade salt back to their natural wetland ecosystems that support a variety of waterfowl and wildlife.

This update is part of an ongoing effort to communicate District news and information to ratepayers. Learn more about the District at www.sonomacountywater.org/svcsd or contact District Operations Manager Brian Anderson at 707.521.1812.



SONOMA VALLEY COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT Update: About the District

Who collects and treats your sewage?

The Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District has provided sewage collection and treatment services for Sonoma Valley since the 1950s. The District has grown to become the largest wastewater treatment plant operated by the Water Agency with a current treatment design capacity of three million gallons of sewage per day. The District's treatment plant is located at 22675 8th Street East, Sonoma.

Service area

The District service area covers approximately 4,500 acres and includes the City of Sonoma and the unincorporated areas of Agua Caliente, Boyes Hot Springs, Eldridge, Fetters Hot Springs, Glen Ellen, Schellville, Femelec, and Vineburg. The District treats wastewater from approximately 17,027 equivalent single-family dwellings - such as homes and apartments.

Sewage treatment level

The treatment plant cleans the community's sewage to tertiary-recycled-water standards (also referred to as advanced water treatment), which is the highest level of treatment defined by the State of California (sometimes known as Title 22 standards). This level of treatment allows for unrestricted reuse in virtually all recycled-water applications.

Sonoma County Water Agency's role

During a 1995 restructuring of county government, the Sonoma County Water Agency assumed responsibility for managing the county sanitation zones and districts, including the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District.

Board of Directors

The Mayor of the City of Sonoma, the First District Supervisor and the Chair of the Board of Supervisors act as the District's Board.

This update is part of an ongoing effort to communicate District news and information to ratepayers.

Learn more about the District at www.sonomacountywater.org/svcsd or contact District Operations Manager Brian Anderson at 707.521.1812.



Public Outreach



Public tours



Service Area

The **RRCSO service area** covers approximately 2,200 acres and includes the unincorporated areas of Rio Nido, Guerneville, Guerneville Park, and Vacation Beach. The RRCSO treatment plant provides service to approximately 3,200 parcels using a gravity collection system and treats wastewater from approximately 3,200 equivalent single-family dwellings.

The treatment plant cleans the community's wastewater to tertiary recycled-water standards (also referred to as advanced water treatment), which is the highest level of treatment defined by the State of California (codified in Title 22). This level of treatment allows for unrestricted reuse in virtually all recycled-water applications.

Wastewater goes through three treatment steps before it is considered tertiary recycled water: primary treatment, biological treatment (secondary), and filtration (tertiary). This is followed by disinfection, whereby chlorine is used to destroy pathogenic microorganisms. These steps are necessary before tertiary recycled water is used for agricultural or landscape irrigation or released into the Russian River.

Between October 1 and May 14, tertiary recycled water from the treatment plant is discharged into the Russian River. Between May 15 and September 30, the recycled water is used to irrigate the Northwood Golf Course and Forests outside the plant.

Sonoma County Water Agency's Role

During a 1995 restructuring of the county government, the Sonoma County Water Agency assumed responsibility for managing the county's sanitation zones and districts, which provide wastewater treatment, collection, and disposal for approximately 22,000 residences and businesses. Because some local wastewater treatment plants have not been significantly improved in more than 20 years, capital projects are needed to ensure compliance with state and federal treatment and discharge requirements. Each sanitation zone and district operates under a unique, individual permit from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (San Francisco and North Coast regions) that sets the requirements for operation. The RRCSO operates under a permit from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

About Recycled Water

Nature has recycled water for millions of years. By duplicating much of nature's process through tertiary treatment, we are able to purify water to ensure that it meets the strict standards set by the California Department of Public Health. There are very stringent water-quality laws that apply to recycled water. The state standards for recycled water are related to Title 22 and are incorporated in Title 22, Chapter 3, Division 4 of the California Code of Regulations, with stipulations applying to various types of reuse and levels of required treatment. The Regional Water Quality Control Board regulates the use and the application of recycled water and any associated runoff.

Title 22 allows for many uses of recycled water, including irrigation of food crops, orchards, and vineyards as well as parks, playgrounds, cemeteries, schoolyards, residential landscaping, freeway landscaping, golf courses, ornamental nurseries, and pastures for animals. Recycled water can also be used for fish hatcheries, cooling towers, decorative fountains, and fishing or boating recreational impoundments. Other allowable uses include industrial processing, commercial laundries, soil compaction, mixing concrete, making artificial snow, and flushing toilets, urinals, and sanitary sewers.

State health officials monitor the recycled water produced by RRCSO to ensure that it meets federal, state, and local water quality standards. Recycled water is transported through a system of purple pipes, completely separate from the drinking water and wastewater systems.

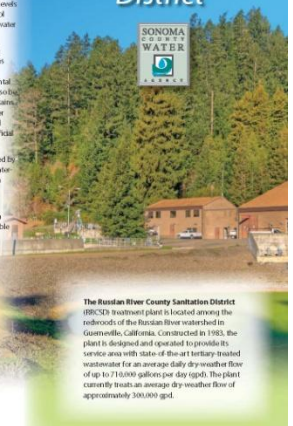
It's important to note that recycled water is cheaper than potable water and, in the case of drought, is a more reliable supply. For more information about recycled water, visit www.sonomacountywater.org.

RRCSO Board of Directors

Valerie Brown, First District Supervisor
Mike Kerns, Second District Supervisor
Shirley Zane, Third District Supervisor
Paul L. Kelley, Fourth District Supervisor
Ellen Carillo, Fifth District Supervisor

For more information about the RRCSO, visit www.sonomacountywater.org or call (707) 542-1900.

Russian River County Sanitation District



The Russian River County Sanitation District (RRCSO) treatment plant is located among the redwoods of the Russian River watershed in Guerneville, California. Constructed in 1983, the plant is designed and operated to provide its service area with state-of-the-art tertiary-treated wastewater for an average daily dry-weather flow of up to 715,000 gallons per day (gpd). The plant currently treats an average dry-weather flow of approximately 300,000 gpd.

Educational materials

Milestone Events: SVCSD R5



“Water agency builds new reservoir”

Sonoma Index Tribune

August 15, 2011

Milestone Events: RRCSD UV



“Sewer plant upgrade praised at ceremony”

Sonoma West Times

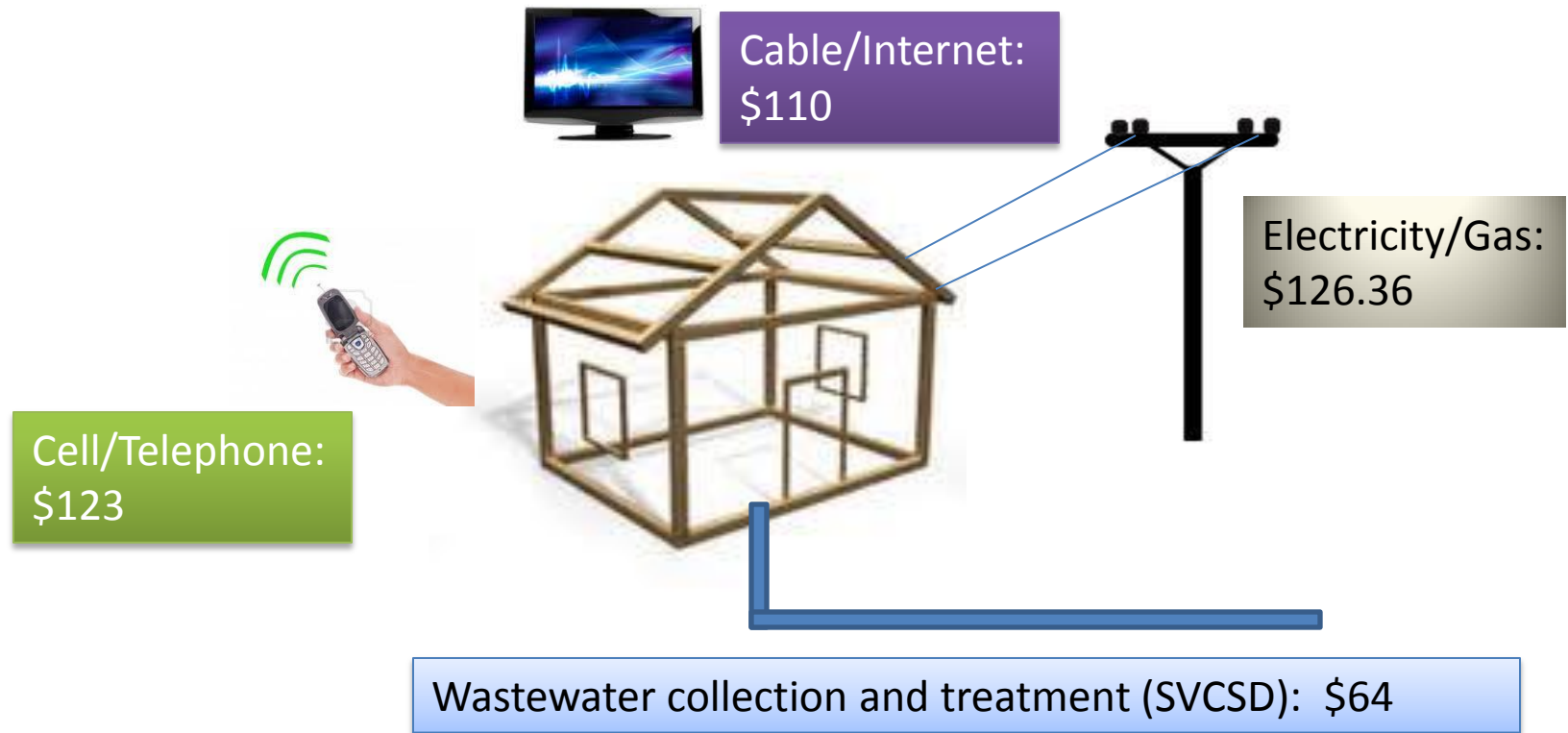
March 28, 2012



Ongoing Maintenance, Operations



Average Utility Costs



Sonoma Valley CSD New Rate Plan

OPEN LETTER TO SONOMA VALLEY COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT RATEPAYERS

REDUCE NEXT YEAR'S SEWER BILL, SAVE WATER NOW!

If approved, a new volume-based rate structure will calculate part of your sewer bill based on your winter water use. Avoid using water outdoors during the winter and take advantage of District rebate programs. Visit www.sonomacountywater.org/svcsd or call 707.547.1918.

Dear Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District Residential Customers:

The Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District (District) is proposing to change the way your residential sewer bill is calculated. The District recently completed a study aimed at giving ratepayers a way to exercise control over part of their sewer bill while encouraging water conservation. The study found that volume-based rate structures better account for household sewer discharge, promote water conservation, and provide financial reliability for District services. The study also found that volume-based rates would provide District ratepayers with the opportunity to control a portion of their sewer bill. The proposed volume-based rate structure would only apply to residential ratepayers, not commercial accounts.

THE CURRENT BILLING CALCULATION METHOD

District sewer bills are currently calculated based on usage of an Equivalent Standard Dwelling ("ESD"). An ESD is defined as what an average single family home would use in a given year. All single family homes, which constitute most of the users in the District, are charged the same flat charge based on 1 ESD, regardless of the amount of water used in a home and treated at the District. Thus, this method does not reward households who use less water and create less sewage for treatment.


The proposed volume-based rate calculation is based on two factors:

- 30 percent volume-based: The volume charge is calculated by the average monthly winter water use per household based on specified winter months, multiplied by 12 months to derive the annual use. Average winter water use provides an accurate accounting of indoor water use and its impact to the District's treatment facilities because outdoor irrigation should be off during the winter months. This volume-based charge recovers costs to the sewage treatment and collection system that are affected by use and vary with the amount of sewage conveyed and treated.
- 70 percent fixed-costs: The fixed charge recovers costs that the sewage treatment and collection system incurs regardless of increased or decreased sewage flow into the system.

WHAT'S NEXT?

1. **Get Answers** Contact Spencer Bader, Sonoma County Water Agency Division Manager Administrative Services, 707.521.6207, spencerb@scwa.ca.gov. The District has created a web page dedicated to educating ratepayers on the proposed rate structure. View the web page online at www.sonomacountywater.org/svcsd
2. **Proposition 218 notices** (a state-required notice informing ratepayers of annual rate changes) will be mailed to District ratepayers in spring, 2012.
3. **Public hearing** : The District's Board of Directors will hold a public hearing in June 2012 to hear a presentation from District staff on the proposed volume-based rate structure and to allow public comment. The District will consider adoption of the FY 2012-2013 rates, pending results of the Proposition 218 notices, in June 2012. The District will also consider adoption of the volume-based rate structure at this same time.

Thank you from the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District Board of Directors,



Efrén Carrillo
Chair
Sonoma County Water Agency
Board of Directors



Valerie Brown
First District Supervisor
Sonoma County Water Agency
Board of Directors



Laurie Gallian
Mayor
City of Sonoma



SonomaValleyCounty
SanitationDistrict

Note: For locations with no winter usage, the 12 month average usage will be used. For Valley of the Moon Water District and City of Sonoma customers, the period from November through February will be used.

“Changes in sewer bills
on the way”

Sonoma Index Tribune

November 14, 2011

Open letter to Sonoma
Valley CSD Ratepayers

FY 2012/13 District/Zone Rates

<u>DISTRICT/ZONE</u>	\$ monthly increase
South Park	\$1.33
Sea Ranch	\$3.75
Sonoma Valley	\$3.33
Occidental	\$6.67
Penngrove	\$7.58
Russian River	\$4.83
Geyserville	\$1.33
Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup	\$4.00

Learn More...

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sonomacountywater.org/sanitation

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